

New York Saturday Journal

A HOME WEEKLY FOR WINTER NIGHTS AND SUMMER DAYS.

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Vol. VI.

E. F. Beadle,
William Adams,
David Adams,
PUBLISHERS.

NEW YORK, DECEMBER 11, 1875.

TERMS IN ADVANCE
(One copy, four months, \$1.00
One copy, one year, \$3.00
Two copies, one year, \$5.00)

No. 300.

A LOVE SONG.

BY N. N.

Where the nightingale warbles at setting of sun,
I wander alone with my love at my side;
And, kissed by the shadows around gathering dun,
Her cheek with the tint of the blushing rose is dyed.
And I whisper, "Sweet maiden, all blindly I grope,
Let thine eye light my pathway, beacon of hope.
Oh! pity a heart that in darkness doth grope,
Be thine eye to its pathway a beacon of hope."
On her cheek's satin surface the long lashes rest;
And droops her proud head, like a lily the gale
Too roughly caresses; and flutters her breast
As the ringdove's when dangers her nestlings
assail.
Chorus: And I whisper, etc.
Now the snowy lids lifting, disclose to my sight
Two lamps empyreal, illumed by the soul,
Whose effulgent beams, bursting afar on the night,
Guide my spirit in safety and peace to its goal.
Chorus:
And I whisper, "Sweet maiden, no longer I grope;
For thine eye lights my pathway, a beacon of hope.
No longer, sweet maiden, in darkness I grope,
For the light of thine eye is my beacon of hope."

Vials of Wrath:

OR,

THE GRAVE BETWEEN THEM.

BY MRS. MARY REED CROWELL,
AUTHOR OF "TWO GIRLS' LIVES," "LOVE-
BLIND," "OATH-BOUND," "BARBARA'S
FATE," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VIII.
SUB ROSA.

THE moment Frank Havelstock met the household in the breakfast-parlor, the morning after Georgia's interview with her husband, that had resulted with such pitiful fatality, he saw at a first glance that the event had transpired—the event upon which he had built his plans, the event he had caused to transpire by his far-sighted, quiet treacherousness.

It was done, exactly as he hoped it would be done, although when he could not decide and cared less to know. All he wanted to know and see was known and seen by him, as he sauntered among the gay little party that was grouped in one end of the apartment.

Ida Wynne met his low, half-confidential greeting with a flush of frank delight, he had such a way of making all women believe he existed but for them.

"You surely enjoyed the 'pleasant dreams' I wished you last night, Miss Wynne, for you have come from the sacred realms of slumber as fresh as a rose."

His cool, critical eyes were taking in every detail of her fascinating toilet, from the light-blue knot of ribbon in her flowing hair to the pearl buttons in her white lawn wrapper. He thought what a pretty, graceful little thing she was; hardly enough fire in her to suit him, but certainly very sweet, girlish, and appreciative. He mentally decided that, and the while made a certain tender light radiate from his eyes; it was second nature to him to please women.

And Ida, with a thrill of her foolish heart, thought—well, wild, vague thoughts, that she herself scarcely understood, except that she was very happy, and was so glad Mr. Havelstock was come to Tanglewood.

He sauntered leisurely from Ida's side, and exchanged greetings with the other guests, and then found himself at Georgia's side, looking with evilly triumphant eyes that did not betray themselves in her still, marble-calm face, that showed traces to his and her husband's notice alone, of the awful storm of passion she had weathered. She was pleasantly, reservedly affable, as she always was—the quiet, polished hostess, the fair, noble, unobtrusive woman. Havelstock bowed, then gave her his hand.

She did not hesitate to lay her own in it, although, as she raised her blue eyes one instant to his face, Havelstock saw a peculiar expression in them—a half-wistful look, as if mutely begging his sympathy; a half-reproachful one, as if, all unconsciously, her fine womanly perception recognized him as the destroyer of her happiness; as if she felt as she touched his hand—and felt without accepting the intuition—that this was the hand that had driven the iron into her very soul.

Havelstock understood the subtle influence that affected her, and he knew, as well, that her vague unrest would not unpleasantly affect him; and so he smiled, gravely, and with a frank, honest courtesy that seemed strangely acceptable to her—that added fresh proof to Lexington, who saw it, that Havelstock was a choice friend indeed.

"You are not looking so well as I would wish, Mrs. Lexington. You were up too late last night, I fear. May I prophesy that a happy event to-day will restore your temporarily vanished bloom?"

She could not misunderstand him, and a wild, pained look leaped into her eyes; a weary, heart-sick expression whitened around her lips.

"Do not forecast for me, Frank, for there remains nothing now. That is all over with." Her wailing complaint smote him, a moment, as he dropped her hand. Then Lexington's clear, cheery voice dissipated his regret. "Come, Havelstock, you are monopolizing Georgia's attention entirely too much, considering the state of our appetites. Suppose you give an arm to Ida, and we'll have breakfast?" Mrs. Lexington.

He offered her his arm with a gallantry that



She fairly leered in Ethel's pale, contemptuous face.

perfectly deceived every one who needed to be deceived; and even Havelstock could not but admire the splendid ease with which poor Georgia accepted the situation.

After that the days went on one very much as another. There were drives, boating, delightful flirtations, long days a-picnicking, when Havelstock read Tennyson to Ida Wynne under the cool shadows of forest-trees; there were croquet and billiards, dancing and promenades, in all of which Lexington and Georgia joined, apparently on exactly the right terms, really drifting further and further apart as the golden summer went on and away.

Then came the greatest event of Frank Havelstock's life—an episode that he marveled at as he never had marveled before; when he wondered until amazement was exhausted, how it had happened that he, the adamant-hearted—he, the invulnerable—he, the pet of dozens of eligible girls, had succumbed, at once, hopelessly, to a poor, unknown girl, with a queenly air, a witching face, a pair of rarest bronze-brown eyes, that kindled so at his coming.

He had met Ethel Maryl in a very unromantic, matter-of-fact way, but her grace, her manner, had conquered him almost before some friend at the rustic croquet party had presented him.

Then had followed the race between him and young Leslie Verne, another suitor for the girl's hand; then had come those delicious three or four weeks of watching Ethel and learning how he swayed her with his merest word. And now, a month after he had been at Tanglewood, he had made up his mind to marry her—bright, peerless Ethel.

CHAPTER IX. ETHEL.

A SMALL, Gothic cottage, of light lavender color, with closely-shut green shutters, between whose slats occasionally shone a black, gloomy crepe weeper; with the wide front entrance closed against the joyous June sunshine, and brooding over the entire homestead the dismal shadow of the late visitation of the grim reaper.

Suggestively mournful as the outward appearance of the snug, homelike little place was, nearly all tokens of death's presence had vanished from within, especially in a large, airy bedroom at the head of the stairs, through whose partly open door one passing by could see Mrs. Lawrence, the six-weeks' widow, lolling in a wide easy chair, a novel lying on her lap, and on the little marble table near her a box of candy, with which she had evidently been trying to assuage her lonely grief.

She was faded, with just sufficient relics of beauty to explain the irritation of manner in which she always indulged when speaking of other days when she was younger, and fresher, and fairer.

It was very bitter to Mrs. Lawrence to think other women could fascinate where she was overlooked. She could not accustom herself to the fact that she was hollow-eyed and bony and scanty haired—she who, at twenty, had been the praise of so many lips for her perfect beauty.

She had lost her taste in dressing, too, and persisted in adorning herself in attire only suitable to fresh, glowing girls. She wore her thin hair crepe over her wrinkled forehead, and never omitted the long curls of false hair that she thought "set off her style," as they

hung limply over her sharp shoulder blades. She wore thin, tissue dresses, and wondered why she was not as graceful as Ethel Maryl was, in her muslin wrapper, trimmed with linen braid.

Ethel Maryl! how she had hated and envied that girl from the moment she set her eyes upon her, five years ago, when she came a bride to Mr. Lawrence's cottage—a bride of thirty, who, like many another pretty, vain girl, had refused eligible offers in their halcyon days, in the fond hope and certainty of something grander, and then, in the end, had taken up with what they would have scorned a few years earlier.

Not that John Lawrence was to be scorned; he was a thousand fold nobler man than she was a woman, and his only fault was that he loved her at all, the sober, staid, middle-aged widower, who asked Gertrude Fainham to be his wife, and a mother to his little adopted daughter, Ethel Maryl, whom he and his first wife had taken, in their childlessness, and loved as their own. Ethel's life had been one dream of happiness since she could remember. Her babyhood had been beyond her memory, and her earliest recollections were of herself and Mrs. Lawrence gathering flowers in the same dear old-fashioned garden, through which for nearly sixteen years she had walked daily.

She never had known a want, or a care. She had had the carefullest training, physically, morally, and intellectually.

Her foster-parents had given her every advantage of education, been lavishly liberal of money, so far as their means permitted, dressed her equally with any young girl around, and loved her rapturously.

Under such advantageous surroundings, Ethel Maryl grew to be a most charming girl; her natural disposition found full vent, her dainty, high-bred temperament met ample, appreciative sympathy; and added to her odd, piquant beauty, made her a splendid woman.

She was just eighteen now; with the rare combination of gravity and joyous sweetness; of a frank, spirited, sunny disposition, truthful and honorable to a fault, quick to make friends, capable of retaining them; proud as a duchess, with an inbred scorn of meanness and smallness, and a horror of fawning dependence, that deepened and strengthened with every successive day of her life.

Her physical charms were in perfect accord with her mental and moral attributes; and Mrs. Lawrence's were not the only eyes that had been dazzled and enchanted by her rare, graceful beauty.

She was very slightly under woman's medium size; not enough to suggest thinness, but rather of a slight build that conveyed the idea of womanly dependence and pettiness.

She was inclined to slenderness, with exquisitely rounded limbs, and dazzlingly fair skin, with not the least vestige of color, except in her beautiful, scarlet lips.

Her eyes were intensely dark; large, of a hue of deepest, richest brown, with dark, heavy brows, and curling lashes. Then, to finish the portrait, precisely as an artist would have created the head of his ideal, was Ethel's hair; her splendid, surprising hair, of perfect golden hue. Not yellow; there was no hint of yellow in those long, waving tresses, but as vividly golden as if plunged in a bath of liquid sunshine.

The rare combination of dark eyes and golden hair, is peculiarly beautiful under any circumstances, but in Ethel Maryl, added to her other charms, it made her glorious.

And Mrs. Lawrence fairly hated her; hated

her as she stood just in front of her, her hair brushed carelessly off her low, full forehead, and tied with a narrow band of black ribbon, that matched in hue the muslin morning dress, Ethel wore.

"I suppose you know why I have sent for you this morning. You may as well sit down, for there are several subjects I wish to bring before you."

Ethel rolled a low carpet chair near the window, and leaned her elbow on the sill, her grave, sweet eyes bent in respectful attention on Mrs. Lawrence's face.

The attitude was perfection; and Mrs. Lawrence boiled with jealous rage, as she noted the small, white hand, the round wrist, and the gradual, symmetrical swell of the dazzling white arm; whiter from the contrast with the jet sleeve that fell away to the elbow.

"Artful minx! and she pretends she doesn't know how irresistible she is! A week more, and she never will gall me like wormwood, again, with her high-bred ways, and her quiet, aristocratic independence! Let John Lawrence turn over in his coffin, if he wants to, because I shall deliberately disobey his dying request, to care for Ethel as he would have done. Let him haunt me; I'm more afraid of her living beauty, than any dead man's eyes!"

She thought it, in a vague, fierce, defiant way, as she watched the girl a moment, and then folded her hands on her book, with her jealous eyes riveted on Ethel's sweet, sad face, over which the shadow of Azael's passing wing had left its pitiful mark. She had dearly loved Mr. Lawrence, although she knew she was not his child.

"I presume you have been expecting to be summoned to me for some time, but my nerves have been in such a state that I have felt positively unequal to the task. Now, however, I think the time has come for you to decide upon your plans."

Ethel looked wonderingly at her before she replied.

"My plans? for what, Mrs. Lawrence?"

There was such perfect guileless innocence in the questions, that Mrs. Lawrence could have struck her; it enraged her so.

"You are remarkably angelic, in your ignorance; or what is much more likely, skilled in deceiving! You know perfectly well to what I refer; your plans for your future. What do you intend doing for a living when you leave this house, which, since my husband's death, is, of course, no longer a home for you. With your high-headed ideas, you won't expect me to carry on and continue any romantic affair of his."

Ethel sat quietly, though her heart was pulsing fast, and her head whirled with the suddenness of the position. All that Mrs. Lawrence could detect, was a darkening of the eyes, and a slight quivering, for one second, of the proud, sensitive mouth.

"You take me so entirely by surprise, Mrs. Lawrence, that I can not answer you at once. I never dreamed of such a thing as leaving the only home I ever have known, where I was always so happy until—"

Mrs. Lawrence caught the sentence savagely from her lips.

"Until I came here, you were going to say, I suppose. Well, there hasn't been much love lost between us."

Her quick, excited tones were in sharp contrast to Ethel's low, refined ones.

"I would have said, Mrs. Lawrence, if you had not interrupted me, that I had been very happy here until papa died; although, as you

acknowledge, there has been no sentiment wasted between us."

"Papa!" sneered Mrs. Lawrence; "if you knew how disgustingly it sounded, when you are perfectly aware of the fact that he was no relation to you."

"He was my dearest earthly friend—a father in deed, word, and truth. I shall always speak of him as such. However, this has no bearing upon the subject you introduced."

"You are right. What I wish to say, once for all, is this:—that you have had from the Lawrence estate all you ever will have—and what you have cost, in education, in dress, in keeping, is a fortune in itself. Mr. Lawrence saw fit to make a lady of you, who may be, for all any one knows, the child of basest born people."

Ethel flushed at that—only a second, for her temper was as well under control as it was spirited.

"You display your ignorance of human laws when you say that, Mrs. Lawrence. You know I never could be the daughter of low, ignorant people, poor though they probably were, to have given me to strangers, if they did so. You know I am a lady, Mrs. Lawrence, by instinct, by taste, by feeling."

She made her defense bravely, proudly, and although Mrs. Lawrence realized the girl as infinitely her superior, she could not resist the impulse to add a new thong to the scourge of her tormenting tongue.

"You certainly have no small estimate of yourself, Miss Ethel Maryl. Perhaps you consider yourself the daughter of a millionaire, the heiress of untold gold? Don't you really think now, you might, by some possibility, be—well, for example, Mr. Lexington's child, over there at Tanglewood?"

She fairly leered in Ethel's pale, contemptuous face.

"Or if you deride that modest idea, suppose you make up your mind to earn your undeniable right and title to wealth and position by marrying Mr. Leslie Verne? He is crazy after you, they say."

"Mrs. Lawrence!" and Ethel arose quietly, with a self-conscious hauteur that became her well, as her dark, bright eyes calmly met the widow's restless ones. "It can be but simply a matter of courtesy in me, which I unhesitatingly pay to my father's widow, regardless of the sentiments you have yourself inspired in me toward you, that I tell you I have no designs on Mr. Verne's heart. He is only a dear friend, and as such I suppose he will remain."

"A moment longer—since I shall not resume this subject again, and since on a week from to-day I expect you to vacate this place—I will advise you, since you declare you will not marry Mr. Verne, that you do not refuse Frank Havelstock—if he asks you."

A faint anger crept in Ethel's eyes, and she moved toward the door.

"I am safe in obeying the dictates of my own judgment, I assure you. Neither Mr. Verne, or Mr. Havelstock will influence me in my decision to leave this house—not next week, but at once."

Mrs. Lawrence saw her leave the room, heard the gentle rustle of her skirts as she descended to the floor below, and smiled contentedly as she opened her novel, and helped herself to a chocolate caramel.

CHAPTER X. A TRUE MAN'S LOVE.

ETHEL stopped in the lower hall just long enough to take her little straw hat from the rack, which she put on over her floating hair as she let herself out the front entrance.

She descended the steps of the veranda, and went down across the smooth-shaven lawn toward the road, where the large rustic gates were closed and locked.

She unfastened them, and then once out on the shaded path, with the flickering shadows falling over her bowed head, and the fresh crisp grass making cool paths for her hurrying feet, she slackened her pace, that was the result of her pent-up emotion, and went slowly, thoughtfully along, revolving over and over the sudden changes that had come into her young life.

It would be hard, in a degree, to leave the dear little cottage where plenty and content had reigned so many years—until the second Mrs. Lawrence came—where every article of furniture was like an old friend, and the big rose-bushes on the lawn border had grown with her, summer after summer.

Ethel remembered so well the day Mr. Lawrence had planted the pear trees, years and years before, and she had helped hold them with her wee, white hands while he shoveled in the rich dirt. It had been a moonlight night, and they three, Ethel and Mr. Lawrence and his wife, had laughed because they were sufficiently superstitious to plant them then, rather than in the matter-of-fact daytime.

Ethel could see the trees from where she was, in all their leafy panoply—tall, sturdy trees, with promise of a beautiful crop of luscious, golden-skinned pears—that neither of the three who planted them would ever again eat.

And, when Ethel had supposed she was as deep-rooted for life as they, to be thus torn up, and cast adrift!

A little, fleeting look of wrath crossed her face, then vanished, leaving her full of high, strong, proud self-assurance.

"I would not wish to remain on sufferance even in papa's house; I would not remain even had he bade me, and know that Mrs. Lawrence despised me as she does. The world is

